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CAUSES OF CONFLICT AND THE PROMOTION OF DURABLE PEACE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 28 April 1999 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to bring to your attention the conclusions of the Council of the European Union on the report of the United Nations Secretary-General dated 13 April 1998 entitled "The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" issued on 26 April 1999 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Gerhard Walter HENZE
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Annex

[Original: English and French]

Conclusions of the Council of the European Union on the report of the Secretary-General of 13 April 1998 entitled "The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa"

The European Union welcomes the Secretary-General's report of 13 April 1998 on "The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" (A/52/871-S/1998/318) submitted to the Security Council and the General Assembly. The European Union notes with satisfaction the large measure of support expressed in the United Nations for the contents of the report, in particular for the follow-up to the report initiated within those bodies, as well as within the Secretariat. The report and its follow-up are important contributions to raising the international community's awareness of the need for promoting durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. The European Union is committed to participating actively in the continued follow-up process in close cooperation with other actors concerned.

The European Union commends the Secretary-General's strong advocacy of African development and African security and his efforts to mobilize the international community in support of the continent, inter alia, through the United Nations system within a coordinated framework. The European Union reiterates its strong support for the report, which provides a clear analysis of the sources of conflict and the basis for a comprehensive policy of peace-building, conflict prevention, management and resolution and the promotion of development. The European Union shares and strongly supports the Secretary-General's view of the need for enhancing mutual information and cooperation. The European Union underlines the Secretary-General's conclusion that coherence of policy among donors, both multilateral and bilateral, is essential.

The European Union recalls that, on the basis of the 1997 common position and Council conclusions on conflict prevention and resolution in Africa and a series of related policy documents, it has already adopted an active, comprehensive and integrated approach towards the issue of violent conflicts in Africa. The need for strong political will, African ownership and capacity-building, for focusing on the prevention of violent conflicts, in particular by addressing their root causes at an early stage with an adequate combination of all available instruments, and for closing the gap between analysis, early warning and early action, figure among the key principles of this approach. The European Union is determined to further increase its efforts to pursue an active policy of conflict prevention in accordance with these principles.

The European Union also recalls its firm belief that a stable and democratic political environment is an indispensable precondition for sustainable development. In this context, the European Union reiterates its call also on the Governments of African countries to continue and, where necessary, reinforce their efforts to create such an environment. Measures in the field of respect for human rights, the rule of law, democratization and good

governance have a pivotal role to play in this regard. Equality of rights, opportunities and access to resources between men and women are also fundamental requirements, as stated in the Secretary-General's report. These values are also at the core of the European Union's policy of international cooperation, as the European Union only recently outlined at the first negotiating conference on future cooperation between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States, held at Dakar on 8 and 9 February.

The European Union, in the spirit of global partnership, renews its commitment to the assumption of the responsibilities by the international community as outlined in the Secretary-General's report. The Union as the most important donor to African countries will continue to contribute actively to the creation of durable peace and sustainable development, in particular through its efforts in assisting in the creation of a stable and democratic environment, in eradicating poverty and in integrating African countries into the world economy. In this spirit, the proposed European Union-Africa summit in 2000 will constitute an excellent opportunity to reach solid ground for an effective, integrated and comprehensive relationship between the two continents. The envisaged partnership agreement between the Union and African, Caribbean and Pacific countries which is being negotiated, and which is to replace the Lomé Convention by the year 2000, will play an important role in this regard. Taking into consideration the effects of globalization and trade liberalization European Union and ACP countries agreed at Dakar to reshape their cooperation in order to adapt to these new conditions at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The European Union shares the Secretary-General's view that the current unsustainable debt burden many African countries face poses a threat to the economic security and long-term stability of Africa and requires comprehensive and decisive action by the international community. The European Union is committed to the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative, which is currently under review. Subject to this review the terms of the Initiative may be alleviated provided that the debtor countries are committed to the necessary reforms and other obligations under the programme. The European Union particularly welcomes the beneficial effect that the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative will have for some African countries.

The European Union will also continue to focus on supporting solutions to existing crises and the prevention of the outbreak or recurrence of violent conflicts, including at an early stage, and on post-conflict peace-building. In this context, the European Union will in particular continue and intensify its dialogue with regional and subregional organizations. The European Union will continue to support relevant activities in the field of conflict prevention and resolution under the auspices of the United Nations, also considering that increased attention should be given to matters related to illicit arms flows to and in Africa as well as to safeguarding the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements. The European Union supports the ongoing efforts to improve cooperation between the United Nations and the regional and subregional organizations. In particular, it welcomes the initiative of the United Nations Secretariat to establish a working group on enhancing African peacekeeping training capacity as part of the follow-up to the Secretary-General's report and hopes that the establishment of a United Nations preventive action liaison office in the Organization of African Unity will be implemented quickly.

The European Union welcomes the decision taken by the Economic and Social Council to devote the coordination segment of its substantive session of 1999 to the implementation and coordinated follow-up by the United Nations system of initiatives on African development, and will work to ensure that the coordination segment produces a concrete plan of action for follow-up, with allocation of responsibilities and realistic and measurable targets in priority areas. The European Union hopes that the outcome of the discussions in the Economic and Social Council will form a good basis for the deliberations of the open-ended working group of the General Assembly, which is to prepare the discussion at the fifty-fourth session of the Assembly.